

Project Narrative

GSA is submitting the enclosed proposal for preliminary and final site development plan review by the Commission at its March 5, 2015 meeting. We are also submitting the package pursuant to the terms of the St. Elizabeths Section 106 PA and to the approved and amended EIS and Master Plan for the West Campus. We are also enclosing the required RF study for your review.

The submission proposes the installation of antennas on top of two existing wooden utility poles. The antennas will provide private-carrier cell phone coverage for USCG and DHS employees. The antenna node locations are needed to provide coverage to the central area of the campus for at least three of the major wireless service providers. These locations will support the outdoor neutral host system approved by the Commission in 2013. The proposed antennas are a component of the ongoing interim installation of antennas on campus until a more complete system is designed in concert with the long-term redevelopment and occupancy of the campus. The temporary nature of the installation and use of existing utility poles may be reconfigured in accordance with the campus long-term development.

The antennas will be installed on top of two existing wooden utility poles (as shown in the photos and plans), one the "preferred" location near the northeast corner of the Center Building, and the second at the corner of the ball field near the top of Sweetgum Lane. The two existing wooden poles are 34 feet in height and the attached antenna pole and arms would extend the total height to 40 feet. A small utility cabinet would be installed on grade at the base of each pole. The installation would not require trenching or any ground disturbance for conduit or footings, specifically in order to avoid any potential for an effect to below-grade cultural resources. Connection to power and the telecommunications grid will be obtained by adding one additional cable to the current aerial runs between the poles.

Please note that we are submitting for your review the "preferred" location on the existing telephone pole at the northeast corner of the Center Building (rather than the "alternate" location on an existing pole closer to the front door of the Center Building. Both are shown in the site plan and in the photo simulations.) The antenna would be installed during the time period that the façade of the Center Building will be braced and surrounded by the vehicles, work trailers, and protective fencing for trees and vegetation consistent with an active construction site. GSA will soon resume consultation with the consulting parties on the rehabilitation of the Center Building and conclude a Memorandum of Agreement for the project, scheduled to be completed in 2017.

As evidence of the ongoing interim nature of the antenna network on campus, GSA notes that the outdoor hub system formerly referred to as "Location 4" in the approved 2013 plans has been eliminated at that location and instead will be installed inside a dedicated equipment room inside the US Coast Guard headquarters. The currently proposed node location on the pole near the Center Building is now labelled "Location 4" (the "preferred" location). The other currently proposed node location at the recreation field near Sweetgum Lane is labelled "Location 5".

We have prepared photo simulations taken from established viewpoints in the circulation pattern and open space north and west of the Center Building. GSA has received concurrence from the DC SHPO under the terms of the 2008 PA that the proposed antenna installation will not cause adverse visual effects to the Center Building or National Historic Landmark campus. Any potential for effects to below-grade resources has been avoided.